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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Elizabeth Henrik, Acting Principal - Arpi Hamalian 2

Towards the Rediscovery of Montreal Artist, Ethel Seath (1879-1963) - Barbara Meadowcroft 3

Denigrating the Damas - Joan Sherwood 8

Obscuring Lesbian History - Carolyn Gammon 13

Women in Science - Elyse Gasco 19

In the Light of Her Own Conscience: AFEAS and the Issue of Abortion - Heather Jon Maroney 24

Femmage à Francoise Auclair - co-ordinated by Susan Shea 28

Views and Reviews

La Foire du livre feministe - Jeanne Maranda 35

Academic Performance Art - Sherry Simon 36

The Ethics of Feminist Reviewing - K.M. Martindale 39

Ma vie comme rivière, tome 3. de Simonne Monet Chartrand - Lucie Lequin 43

The Lady Laureates. by Olga Opfell - Marianne Ainley 45

Technologies of Gender. by Teresa de Lauretis - Bina Freiwald 47

Illustrations - Miriam Cooley . . . . . 18 and Centrefold

ELIZABETH HENRIK...HUMOUR, LOYALTY AND CANDOUR

As great conflicts and controversies arise, as celebrations and order return and as these waves continue recurring and following each other, Elizabeth Henrik smiles her special smile and goes on being her own private, complicated but strangely charming self. All you need to do is to take time from theoretical discussions to force Elizabeth to talk to you and you will discover a well of humour, but she will never compromise her loyalty or candour.

So, she may exasperate you at times. But remember her courage and her loyalty and try talking to her at the cozy level. This is the Elizabeth I discovered. Now it is your turn to enjoy her company for a whole year as Acting Principal. It is a difficult and ungrateful position to be in but she took up the challenge gracefully. But then again you all know this better than I do. So she deserves all the help you can give her and I urge you to be generous in turn.

Elizabeth has been a fellow of the Institute since its inception. She is one of the very few fellows who have maintained their membership without interruption and have, therefore, aided the Institute's growth and development throughout the difficult periods it has experienced. This is a major contribution not only at the institutional level at Concordia but also to the field of Women's Studies.

The loyalty she has shown to the Institute has its high costs: it takes not only deep conviction in the mission and endeavour of the Institute, but also great courage since the Institute and Women's Studies are seen as critical in nature in the university setting. It takes great courage to stand up and be counted. She has stood firm for a whole decade and she is just launching a new one...this is the reward. Best wishes.

Arpi Hamalian, September 22, 1988

TOWARDS THE REDISCOVERY OF MONTREAL ARTIST,
ETHEL SEATH (1879-1963)

One bright day last September, I dropped into the Walter Klinkhoff Gallery on Sherbrooke to have a look at the Ethel Seath Retrospective. It was like stepping back into my childhood. There was the view from the Junior School window: the old, grey-stone house with the soft ribbons of snow. As I moved through the two large rooms devoted to Seath's work, I marveled at the number and variety of the paintings. For to me, as to three generations of girls growing up in Montreal, Seath was not Ethel Seath, the artist, member of the Beaver Hall Hill Group, but Miss Seath, the art mistress.

Two questions buzzed in my mind. How had Seath, who worked as illustrator or teacher all her adult life, managed to produce paintings of such quality? And why hadn't she received more recognition?

Next door, in the Maison Alcan, I was vividly reminded of Seath's forty-five year career as art mistress at The Study. There in the Atrium was an exhibition of Seath's former students, assembled by two Study Old Girls, to celebrate Seath's gifts as a teacher. The collection, which was remarkable for its diversity of style, included work by Phyllis Lambert and Marian Scott, and two intaglio prints by my late sister, Shirley Wales.

Afterwards, as I thought of the role that Seath had played in my sister's development, encouraging an insecure and inarticulate child to find expression through her painting, I realized that the life of Ethel Seath must be recorded. I appointed myself her biographer.

I began by contacting Roger Little, who wrote the excellent sketch of Seath that accompanied the Retrospective. He generously gave me the names of his sources, simultaneously warning me that there was very little untapped material. Was it possible that only twenty-four years after Seath's death no personal papers survived?

I had no difficulty documenting her artistic career. The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts provided information on her teachers, the titles of works submitted to the Museum's annual exhibitions, and the dates of contributions to Canadian and foreign shows. But facts and dates provide

only the skeleton of a biography. The ring of the individual voice—in letters, interviews, and remembered conversations—that is what I needed to clothe the bones.

The people who remember Seath best are her former students and colleagues. From interviews with some of these students and with Katharine Lamont, former headmistress of The Study, I managed to round out my picture of Seath. She was reserved, soft-spoken and modest— what the Victorian age, into which she was born, considered a gentlewoman. But she had the concentration and the imagination of an artist. She was able to identify with her young pupils because she shared their curiosity about objects and their enthusiasm for trying new things. In teaching, she never imposed her views, but encouraged students to use their own gifts of observation and imagination.

One former student, now a professional artist, when asked about Seath's influence, exclaimed:

"Oh, that woman, I owe her so much. If it hadn't been for her, I would have killed my mother and father and the dog before I was out of my teens!"

Katharine Lamont, headmistress during Seath's last years at The Study, spoke of the sympathy and support she received from Seath, when she, a stranger, arrived to take over the direction of the school. Miss Lamont described sitting in the Art room, in the late afternoon, unburdening herself of some vexatious school problem, while Seath stood at her easel painting.

According to Miss Lamont, the emotional core of Seath's life was her friendship with Margaret Gascoigne, founder of The Study. As Seath said later:

"I thought no more of teaching than of flying, until I met a fine person who was starting a school." (Montreal Star, October 25, 1962). Margaret Gascoigne had been so impressed by a painting of pussy willows that she saw at the Museum that she invited the artist to teach in her school. What a tremendous leap of faith, on the part of both women! At the age of thirty-eight, Seath abandoned a successful job as newspaper

illustrator for a new profession. Their courage was rewarded. Gascoigne gained a confidante, and Seath found a spiritual home.

The two women, although different in temperament (Gascoigne, impulsive and somewhat eccentric; Seath, quieter and more conservative) shared a passion for music and art. Both believed that education involved stimulating children to excel by exposing them to the best in art, literature, and music. The first students of The Study remember the excitement they felt when invited to the Headmistress's apartment for an evening of music. Gascoigne would play from her classical repertoire (she had studied to be a concert pianist), while Seath sat gazing into the fire.

What should have been a long and rewarding partnership was cut short by Gascoigne's early death. Anxiety over the future of The Study during the depression of the 1930s undermined her health; and she died in January, 1934.

For Seath the loss of her friend, possibly the only person with whom she was intimate, was tragic. Too reserved to make friends easily, Seath consoled herself with her painting and the school, which had become "her family." She would go on teaching for twenty-eight years. Although Seath never referred to her age, Miss Lamont sensed that the Septagenarian art teacher must be increasingly lonely as the women with whom she'd taught for forty years retired and died.

What compelled Seath to teach until the age of eighty-three? It may have been partly financial. But after The Study introduced a pension scheme in the 1950s, she, presumably, could have retired and devoted her time to painting. So why did she continue to concern herself with rambunctious six-year-olds and moody adolescents? Was it habit? Fear of loneliness? Or a deep committment to the ideal of education that she had shared with Margaret Gascoigne?

My research suggests that Seath had been consistently undervalued as a teacher and as an artist. Arthur Lismer is generally given credit for revolutionizing the teaching of art to children. But Seath, who began teaching in 1917, used many of the same techniques. She gave her pupils large pieces of paper, and encouraged them to use their imagination, rather than to copy.

"Don't be shy," she'd say. "Fill the paper. Make a mess."

As though teaching five days a week wasn't enough, Seath joined Anne Savage at the Museum on Saturday mornings in a pioneer project to introduce art to school children. These successful classes began in 1937, three years before Lismer arrived in Montreal. Is it because Seath was a woman, teaching in a girl's school that her contribution has been overlooked?

As an artist, Seath developed slowly. Obliged to earn her own living, she probably considered herself lucky to find a job in the art department of the Montreal Witness. For twenty years she worked as an illustrator for various Montreal papers. Her salary enabled her to continue her training at the Art Association of Montreal, studying under William Brymner and Maurice Cullen. In 1920, she joined other Montreal artists, most of whom had studied with Brymner, to form the Beaver Hall Hill Group. The outstanding thing about this Group is that it included at least ten women: Prudence Heward, Anne Savage, Lilias Torrance Newton, Emily Coonan, Nora Collyer, Mabel Lockerby, Mabel May, Kathleen Morris, Sarah Robertson, and Ethel Seath.

Membership in the Beaver Hall Hill Group must have meant a lot to Seath. Canadian artists in the 1920s were still struggling for recognition. By banding together, members of the Group were able to mount exhibitions and promote their own work. Although the Beaver Hall Hill Group existed formally for less than two years, the professional ties between the women lasted for decades. Seath frequently exhibited her work in conjunction with Anne Savage, Mabel Lockerby and other members of the Group. But how close were the personal ties between these women? Did they form some kind of network, as professional women do today, to support and encourage each other?

In the next year, I hope to find the answers to these questions. I am extending my research to include other women in the Beaver Hall Hill Group. I want to interview the families and friends of the artists to get a clearer picture of what it was like to be a professional artist in a society which expected women to confine their talents to the domestic sphere. Alfred Pinsky refers to the conflict Anne Savage experienced daily in her upper middle class milieu between seeing art as "decoration to life" or seeing it as the "driving force which she knew it to be." When I

consider the commercial thrust of Montreal society before the war, and the anti-cultural bias of most of the middle class, I marvel at the audacity of these women, and thirst to know more about them.

Eventually, I hope to publish a book on the Beaver Hall Hill women. Not a tehnical study. I leave that to the art historians; but a book that will celebrate them as women, as pioneers, and as artists.

Barbara Meadowcroft

1. See Anne McDougall, Anne Savage: The Story of a Canadian Painter (Montreal: Harvest House, 1977), p. 51.

DENIGRATING THE DAMAS: THE EXPERIENCE OF THE JUNTA DE DAMAS OF EIGHTEENTH CENTURY MADRID.

Doing research in women's history can be a frustrating experience, particularly if one is interested in the history of poor women. The rich and famous (then, as now, interchangeable terms) have their chroniclers: sometimes they themselves kept journals, wrote letters and participated in note-worthy events. The poor have passed through the prism of history as an undifferentiated "crowd" or "mob." To find poor women, then, it is often necessary to have recourse to rich women. Studying the Madrid foundling hospital, the Inclusa, revealed that a group of benevolent aristocratic women who took over its administration at the end of the eighteenth century had wider concerns with the education, working and prison conditions of their less fortunate sisters. Neither poor nor uninfluential, this group, the Junta de damas, left records about the other, forgotten women of eighteenth century Spain. The purpose of this paper is to briefly introduce the important accomplishments of a small group of enlightened, aristocratic women.

The Junta de damas was an auxiliary of the Royal Economic Society of Madrid. Like the associations of amigos del país (patriots) formed in major Spanish cities in the second half of the eighteenth century, the Junta was dedicated to applying the ideas of the Enlightenment to the economy and social welfare. Accepting women in the prestigious Madrid Economic Society was unusual, but members generally conceded that women had a role to play in bringing about Spain's new day. Upper-class women were to accept their social responsibilities and lower-class women were to adapt to new economic techniques. As one of the amigos explained, "there are 25,000 idle women in Madrid who could have a major impact in improving Spain's economy." Woman power was to be harnessed for the good of the state.

But even for a group of progressive, Enlightenment intellectuals admitting women was a radical proposal reluctantly accepted. It came up in one of their first meetings in 1775 when Manuel José Marín suggested that members' wives, mothers, sisters and daughters become associates. He argued that women could bring their talents for order, cleanliness and care to the preparation of milk products, the raising of fowl, the manufacturing of buttons, gloves, silk scarves and belts and developing the arts of

painting and drawing. A female auxiliary could occupy women from the upper classes in encouraging these activities on the part of working women and both groups would become models of ideal family life. However appealing this agenda, it was not until 1784 that a serious debate took place. Opposed was Jose de Cabarrus, a secretary of the treasury in the royal cabinet, who voiced the fear that once admitted, women would dominate their male colleagues. He solemnly warned "within fifteen years the whole society will be run by women." Gaspar de Jovellanos, another highly-placed official and the author of an important inquiry into land reform, defended the ladies, though not in terms calculated to warm the heart of a modern feminist. He reassured the members that women's natural timidity would prevent them from mingling their weak voices in male discussions. Even for their supporters, women's equal membership was not a matter for consideration. The Junta de damas was set up as a separate and subordinate group whose plans, projects and deliberations were to be brought up to the parent body for ratification.

Given that their welcome was less than enthusiastic, why were women admitted at all? A woman's auxiliary was needed to operate a project of the Economic Society that was experiencing problems. Escuelas patrioticas (patriotic schools) had been set up in four working-class areas of Madrid to teach poor girls and women the skills of carding wool, spinning and weaving, as well as basic literacy. Although these schools were important to the Society's overall aims, their operation was time-consuming and expensive, and the product of inferior quality. Though successful in that around 200 women and girls were enrolled, the schools were in serious financial difficulties. It made good sense to hand over the chore of administration to a group willing to assume a burden that had become onerous.

Even after resistance had been subdued, membership was not easily bestowed. The first woman enlisted in 1786 had impeccable credentials. Dona Maria Isidra Quintana y Guzman was a young scholar of science and philosophy, an honorary doctor at the University of Alcala, a member of the Royal Academy and already enrolled in the Basque society of amigos del pais. The second was exceptional for other reasons: she was the wife of the president of the Madrid society. Royal patronage, in particular the registration of two royal nieces and of the Princess of Asturias, made membership sought after. By 1790 there were forty noblewomen from the

highest ranks of the aristocracy. Indeed the parent organization demanded higher standards of birth than for themselves. And the Junta was far from democratic in other ways. The president and secretary were to be chosen for three year terms, but in practice between 1787 and 1801 there were only two presidents, the Countess of Benavente and the Countess of Torrepalma y Trullas (1790-1801). The office of secretary was held for eighteen years by the redoubtable Countess del Montijo who proved to be the moving force in the organization.

One of the projects initiated by the secretary was a concerted campaign to take over and reform the Inclusa foundling home. Its mortality rate, while no worse than in such hospitals elsewhere in Europe, was both a scandal and a challenge. The Junta initiated a number of measures which in effect made the Inclusa a prototype of a pediatric hospital. They moved the building to healthier quarters, brought the Sisters of Charity from France to run it, and instituted numerous measures of hygiene on medical advice. Unfortunately, given the crowded conditions of the hospital, the state of medical knowledge and the desperate condition of many of the expositos (foundlings) before admission, their efforts were by and large unsuccessful. Nevertheless, the enthusiasm, intelligence and perseverence they brought to their projects were models of enlightened benevolence.

Nor was their contribution weak on theory. They produced plans for new technology and a school of design for the textile industry and for a montepio (mutual benefit society) for yarn-workers. They promoted education in moral and physical hygiene, particularly the new techniques of vaccination and artificial feeding. (The Inclusa's formula to nurse syphilitic infants was adopted in all the other foundling hospitals in Spain.) There was even an early version of affirmative action. They sought to have the government change guild rules which confined women to traditional tasks and excluded them from skilled trades in cloth-making and tailoring. However, the report with this request was never sent on by the Royal Economic Society. In fact, requiring male approval became increasingly annoying as the self-confidence of the Junta grew. In 1794 the women asserted their independence to become a separate body, although still formally associated with the Royal Economic Society.

One example illustrates the gap that existed between the women's attitude toward their role and the men's sense of an appropriate task. It

concerned a competition to be held for a dress code. The plan was to ask the Junta to decide on a design for three basic uniforms to be assigned to upper-class, middle-class and working-class women. The idea behind this utopian scheme was to discourage women from spending money frivolously on extravagant dress. Implicit was the assumption that female weakness for foreign styles and workmanship was responsible for the trade deficit. The response of the Countess del Montijo was trenchant and brief. She pointed out that such a code would be impossible to enforce and would exacerbate class conflict, adding with a touch of acerbity, that when men provided an example of simplicity in attire then women might be expected to follow.

The most productive years of the Junta de damas coincided with those of other associations of amigos del pais. The reaction against France and French enlightenment ideas during the Napoleonic Wars, and the restoration of the ultra-conservative Ferdinand VII, weakened the influence of organizations whose members, had been called "afrencesados" (francophiles). The exile of the Countess del Montijo on a charge of Jansenism in 1805 and a similar humiliation of the Countess de Trullas ended the best years for the Junta. However, their accomplishments were remarkable not only for the time, but in absolute terms. Those accomplishments are still waiting recognition. One modern historian has gone so far as to compare the women's activities in textiles and dairy products with the dressing up as milk-maids that Marie Antoinette and her friends indulged in at the Trianon of Versailles. To do so is to denigrate a group of women who did serious work and deserve to be taken seriously. It is time to set the record straight.

Joan Sherwood

1. J.M.Sherwood "Abandoned and Illegitimate Infants in Eighteenth Century Spain," Ph.D. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1978. See also Poverty in Eighteenth Century Spain: The Women and Children of the Inclusa, Forthcoming, University of Toronto Press.

2. Memorias de la Sociedad Economica Matritense, Madrid, 5 vols., 1780-95.

3. Gaspar de Jovellanos, Obras Completas, Bibioteca de Autroes Espanoles, v. 50, p. 55.

4. The best source on the Junta de damas is a biography of the Countess del Montijo by Paula de Demerson, Maria Francisca de Sales Portocarrero (Condesa del Montijo): Una figura de la Ilustracion, Madrid, 1975.

5. R.J. Shafer, The Economic Societies in the Spanish World (1765-1812), Syracuse University Press, 1958.

On October 15, 1988, the following article appeared in the Montreal Gazette:

Unhappy peasant girls die in group suicides

BEIJING (Reuter) — An impoverished area of south China has been hit by a spate of mass suicides by dissatisfied peasant girls yearning to be reincarnated as sophisticated city women.

The *China Women's Daily* said 51 young women, most of them teenagers, had died recently in a series of group suicides in villages in mountainous Jiangxi province.

It said many of the victims dressed in their best clothes before throwing themselves into lakes together, in the belief that they would come back to a better life.

Many had despaired of their poverty and lack of education after visiting Chinese cities, and resented their parents for forbidding them to go to high school or leave their village, the report said.

"We have nothing good to eat, wear or do," the *Woman's Daily* quoted one girl as saying before her death. "At home we are controlled by our parents, and when we marry by our husbands. City girls wear fine clothes and go to cinemas . . . It is the life of an angel. Why are people's lives so different?"

The newspaper said many of the parents of the suicide victims had disowned the dead girls because of local superstitions.

The families of four girls nailed their corpses to their coffins to prevent their spirits escaping, the newspaper said.

The daily said authorities were baffled by the series of suicides, adding that such cases had been unknown before 1980. Previously peasants were restricted from entering cities and living standards were relatively equal.

This article provides a small but telling case study of how women's history, and particularly lesbian history, is modified by the patriarchal media. It is difficult to know the exact process of modification. Did it originate with the China Women's Daily? With Reuter? Or with the Gazette? A feminist who has studied the history of women in China might know that

the article can only fully be understood within the context of a long history of Chinese marriage resistance sisterhoods which sometimes took, and possibly still takes, the form of mass suicide.

Marriage Resisters

Janice Raymond in A Passion for Friends (1986) gives an in-depth account of these sisterhoods which I draw on here. Historically, Chinese women, "yin" in the Confucian yin/yang dichotomy, were considered dark, negative, ill-omened and empty. A proverb like "feeding girls is feeding cowbirds" demonstrates the degree of misogyny in Chinese society. A woman was a temporary member of her natal family and married into her "permanent" family. An unmarried woman was considered a "woman without a family." Because Chinese religious custom dictated that a married woman could only pray for the dead of her "permanent" family, she was essentially useless to her natal family. Female infanticide and the selling of girls and women into slave labour were common.

Although marriage resisters were found throughout China after the last half of the nineteenth century, most lived in the Canton delta region where women working in the silk trade were economically self-sufficient. In one area, 81% of all paid workers were women and at least one out of ten women was unmarried. Some anti-marriage groups followed a Buddhist belief that marriage and procreation were impediments to higher spiritual advancement. Raymond points out sexual abstinence was interpreted to mean heterosexual abstinence and "lesbian practices were fairly common among these women" (p. 127). Other groups of Sworn Sisters or in Chinese, "mutually tied by oath" took life-long vows of spinsterhood in couples or groups. Collectively, they organized work, Spinster Houses to live and care for elders, financial systems for mutual aid, celebrations and retirement. These dramatically improved the quality of life. In the Cantonese area, this "resistance ecology" resulted in the disappearance of female infanticide, lower birth rates and more wide-spread abortion—effects lasting to the present.

In their communal houses, "precious volumes" documented the resisters' history and served to encourage girls not to marry. Girls' Houses were organized so girls from farming families could receive tutoring. Their growing up together "created the social and political conditions for the survival of those friendships beyond youth. It was normal for girls to expect a future with each other" (pp. 125-6).

Some of these girls and women, however, could not escape enforced marriage. The Pu lo-chia, or "not going to family," were women who had to marry but refused to consummate the marriage sexually, or live with the husband and his family, although they often supported his family economically. The Tau-shu nu, or "never to marry," were women who would not marry at any cost even if that meant suicide. Chinese gazetteers of the time reported incidents of Sworn Sisters committing suicide in couples or en masse. A Chinese story entitled "Suicide as Virtue" (Smith, 1899) tells of one woman, engaged in childhood, who had joined a "never to marry" sisterhood but was forced by her parents to marry. She attempted suicide, was resuscitated and the wedding held. By bribing the female servants one night, she escaped and joined her Sworn Sisters in a mass suicide by drowning. The translator adds: "This kind of tragedy is not uncommon in this part of the land".

Raymond includes a feminist analysis:

> The marriage resister saw her suicide within a tradition that viewed it as a public and honorable act....This is not to romanticise female suicide but to invest it with a political dimension, a dimension not often ascribed to women as it is to men who commit such an act for a larger cause. (p. 130).

What Happened to the Marriage Resisters?

The collapse of the silk industry in the 1930s meant that many women lost their economic independence. With the victory of the Communist Party in 1949 and the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), Sworn Sisterhoods were seen as "feudal and backward" and were eradicated in their institutionalized form. Ironically, these women who lived and worked collectively, found no place in a socialist revolution. Many resisters emigrated to large cities, taking work as domestic servants in couples. Even then, "kongsi" or residences run by women for women sprang up. Today, individual resisters are known to exist.

Except for the Chinese gazetteers, the history of the marriage resisters was effectively buried. Neither Confucian nor Communist historians were eager to record the history of strong, independent women thriving in a patriarchal culture, let alone define these women as lesbian. Westerners often found out about them by chance. One traveller to the

Cantonese silk area in the 1930s, Agnes Smedley, was treated to a male guide's hostility towards the resisters. He told her that these women were "notorious throughout China as Lesbians. They refuse to marry...They're too rich—that's the root of the trouble!" (Raymond, p. 133). Informants living in 1958 described their own lesbian involvements, but only after being told that such relationships existed in Europe. According to one employer, resisters who became domestics were known to "make use of your beds when you go out" (Raymond, p. 133-4).

It is not so important to know that all, most, or some of the marriage resisters were practicing lesbians as it is to understand how successfully the resisters opposed male domination within a heterosexist society. Although our information only covers a century, undoubtedly the resistance did not spring out of a void, nor did it end abruptly. One can conjecture that Chinese women, and women the world over, have been resisting male domination in the form of marriage for millennia.

Re-reading Women's History

The Gazette article, now takes on a very different reading. Peasant girls "yearning to be reincarnated as sophisticated city women" must be seen as a condescending version of their motives and actions. For a "girl" to be reincarnated as a "woman" betrays sexism on the language level alone. But probably the most telling line in the article is the quote from the Woman's Daily: "At home we are controlled by our parents, and when we marry, by our husbands." This clear statement of women's oppression is undermined by including in the same breath that it is lack of fine clothes and the right to go to the cinema which is vital to these women, not the principles of freedom of movement, education, and independence from male domination. It is written in such a way as to make the reader think that these women are foolish enough to die for clothes and movie tickets.

"Many of the parents...had disowned the dead girls because of local superstitions." Jiangxi province, in the south of China is just north of the Canton delta, the historic stronghold of resistance. Remember, that an unmarried woman was considered a "woman without a family" and so resisters consciously chose to leave their parents in favour of a chosen sisterhood. The question might be, just who "disowned" whom? And, what exactly were these ambiguous "local superstitions?" Except for the "precious volumes," little written history of the resisters exists. Women were kept illiterate

(and are still disfavoured in education), so the tradition of these warrior-like women who resisted marriage was passed by word of mouth through generations of women. Could these be the "superstitions" that parents feared?

Lastly, the Chinese paper said that "authorities were baffled by the series of suicides, adding that such cases had been unknown before 1980." Has the silencing of resistance been so complete that "authorities" know nothing of the suicides so frequently reported only a few decades ago? Whether or not these women were Sworn Sisters or simply following an oral tradition which sees suicide as a brave, virtuous, and legitimate act of defiance against patriarchal oppression, leaving out any reference to the marriage resisters is historically inaccurate.

One More Act of Resistance

The Gazette article is probably the first and may be the last that most Montrealers will hear of the Chinese Marriage Resisters. Their history and these current acts of defiance are recorded there in such a way as to divest them entirely of political meaning. Fifty-one young women committing suicide is reduced to a "baffling" act by "girls" who want to become "women," and will die rather than go without fine clothes. They are labelled "victims" rather than conscious actors in their own lives.

It is no secret that the mainstream media, for the most part, records the world from a male eye. By selective recording it obscures or trivializes women's role in society. The Gazette article is one small example. This essay is an attempt to correct it and is, in itself, yet one more act of resistance.

Carolyn Gammon
Lesbian Studies Coalition of Concordia

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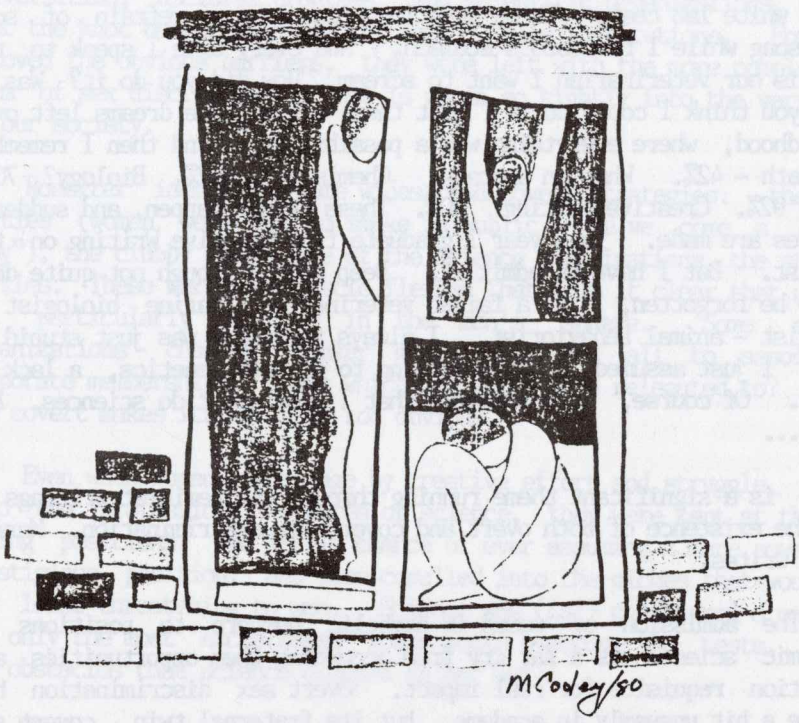


WOMEN IN SCIENCE

It's late at night and I'm lying awake in my old bedroom in the attic. Coco is snuggled into my arms and she's staring up at me with her foggy eyes. She's getting old. The misty film that swirls in her eyes are cataracts. Most older dogs get them. You can look into their eyes and watch their world become loose and liquidy - like egg yolk. I'm dog sitting while my parents are out of town. I spend my days speaking to the vet on the phone. We discuss Coco's case. "How many milligrams of OPDD is she currently receiving? What's her water intake? What is her white blood cell count ? Do the tests reveal a pituitary failure or an adrenal gland malfunction?" I'm getting so good at this that I'm thinking of buying myself a white lab coat. These questions play like a refrain of some favorite song while I rub Coco's stomach. And every time I speak to the woman who is our veterinarian I want to scream, "How did you do it? Was it hard? Do you think I could do it?" But these are antique dreams left over from childhood, where everything was a possibility. And then I remember grade 10 math - 42%. What an average! Chemistry? 62%. Biology? 70%. English? 92%. Creative Writing? 90%. These things happen, and suddenly your choices are made. This year I graduate from Creative Writing on the Dean's List. But I have to admit it. Deep down, though not quite deep enough to be forgotten, I am a failed veterinarian - marine biologist - primatologist - animal behaviorist. I always thought I was just stupid at sciences. I just assumed it had something to do with genetics, a lack of math cells. Of course, it's possible that I just can't do sciences. And then again...

There is a significant theme running through the feminist writings on science: The existence of both overt and covert sex discrimination. Marion Namenwirth writes,

> The admission of women in symbolic numbers to positions in academic science is a far cry from according them opportunities and attention requisite for real impact. Overt sex discrimination has become a bit unseemly in academe, but its fraternal twin, covert sex discrimination, thrives within academic science (1).

Not only does sexism thrive in academic science, it thrives everywhere that "professionalization" and "sophistication" are supposed to be

dominant. The more sophisticated our society becomes, the more subtle and sophisticated are the forms of sexism, racism, and any other 'ism' we can fall victim to. Let's hear it for Progress. For me, there is something so sweet and nostalgic about Susan B. Anthony's fight for women's right to vote. Naively, I think how nice it must have been to fight for something concrete. My fights have seemed to be much more abstract, easily dismissed and shadowed by a subtlety that is a life force in our culture. For it is like oxygen or breath - invisible and yet so apparently there.

Margaret Rossiter's Women Scientists In America (1982) shows that overt and covert sex discrimination are intertwined into a knot. As women fought overt sex discrimination by entering colleges, laboratories, universities, doctoral programs, and scientific organizations, they found that the knot became even tighter inside these institutions. For, as they removed the obvious barriers, they were left with the more complex covert form of sex discrimination that is woven so tightly into the very tapestry of our society.

Rossiter identifies some widespread covert strategies: the smoking parties (women were not to smoke in public - "We've come a long way, baby"), the clubby atmosphere of the science organizations, the stag dinner parties. These were male muscle flexing that made it clear that women were not particularly welcome in the men's sphere. Some scientific organizations changed regular memberships for all to associate and corporate memberships. Guess which one women were relegated to? Sometimes the covert makes itself a bit too obvious.

Even when women did manage by creative effort and struggle, to enter into the 'professional' spheres of science, they were kept at the lowest paying positions, had little chance of ever assuming a more powerful and prestigious position, and were coralled into the niches that would prove the least threatening to men. Science was (is?) considered a male sphere and only the most 'exceptional' woman would overcome the tests, barriers, and obstacles that science dropped in her way.

There is, however, a point where the covert is so shadowed in our minds, so much a part of our basic thinking, that we become unconscious of its very concrete effects. It is what Carolyn Merchant calls "the interaction between the super-structure (e.g. world view, ideology,

conceptual schemes) and substructure (e.g. social roles, behavior, production, reproduction) mediated through symbolic normative structures (e.g. image, metaphor, description, prescription, representation)" (2). When these symbolic structures permeate our minds, we are left with the covert sex discrimination that becomes a part of our own psychologies. And it's not just the male psyche. The fact that women have absorbed certain psychological 'truths' about themselves has been more damaging, I would argue, than the more overt sexism of our society.

Merchant argues that it is an unconscious truth that women are equated with nature and men with culture. These symbolic dichotomies make it possible to see male as active and female as passive, male as dominant, female as subordinate, female as untamed nature, male as the conquerer of her mysteries. These ideas, though they may seem abstract at first, become more believable as language assimilates these symbols and images into its common usage.

These ideas are important with reference to science, because it claimed objectivity. Science, and many scientists, operate as though they are free from cultural, gender, or racial pre-judgments. Their wall of objectivity is supposed to make their own personal values, opinions, and biases, impenetrable. Ruth Bleier writes,

> Each scientist has a particular history of experiences and social relationships and, there, a particular world view and set of values, belief, hopes, and needs that are reflected - as they are for everyone else - in what scientists do, how they (we) perceive the world, how they view and experience social relationships and questions of power, and how they practice science (3).

There exists a psychology behind why so few women enter the sciences, and it is not simply that women are discouraged by the male perception of their capabilities. If men have assimilated these age old notions, images, and ideas of what women are capable and not capable of doing, then more dangerously in fact - so have women. And these assumptions begin long before women even begin to decide their life careers.

Alice Rossi argues that education differs for girls and boys and that teachers "teach to boys" (4). This socialization makes sex typed careers

seem pre-ordained. And Martha White shows that women are excluded, in part because of family commitments, from the informal exchanges where science is "caught", not "taught" (5).

Namenwirth writes, "Essential to success, moreover, is confidence in one's abilities". This applies to men as well as to women. But, when overt and covert discrimination succeed in blockading women from science, their sense in their abilities diminishes. Women seem to have pre-ordained ideas of where they can succeed and where they cannot. It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Women fail themselves before the public sphere fails them. Namenwirth continues,

> In assessing the impact of society's efforts to mold its children, it is essential to realize that covert, subtle forces can be exceedingly effective in shaping human behavior. When girls and women are gently discouraged from fully developing their intellectual and creative potential, when they are subtly distracted from seeking positions of power and prestige, the result is the sifting out of all but the most determined minority of women (6).

If the prevailing notion is that only the most "exceptional" woman succeeds in science, then no wonder so few women have opted for science as a career. The confidence to call yourself exceptional is not exactly a prevailing trend among most women. And, this I believe to be a most important point. I believe that we will have really 'made it' not when we succeed in producing another Einstein of the female sex, but rather when the average Jane woman has the opportunity to succeed as well as the average Joe.

Elyse Gasco

Footnotes

1. Marion Namenwirth, "Science Seen Through a Feminist Prism" in Feminist Approaches to Science, Ruth Bleier, ed., p. 30.

2. Carolyn Merchant, "Isis' Consciousness Raised", Isis, 73 (268):400.

3. Ruth Bleier, ed., Feminist Approaches to Science. p. 3.

4. Alice Rossi, "Women in Science: Why So Few?" Science, 148:1196-1202.

5. Martha S. White, "Psychological and Social Barriers to Women in Science," Science, 170.

6. Namenwirth, "Science Seen Through a Feminist Prism," p. 19.

McGill Botany Chair, Dr. Muriel Roscoe, 1959

IN THE LIGHT OF HER OWN CONSCIENCE: AFEAS AND THE ISSUE OF ABORTION.

A recent article in Le Devoir confirmed a suspicion I had formed, but had not been able to prove in the course of a longer research project (1), that the anti-abortion movement was comparatively weak in Quebec. "Right to Life/Pro-vie" activists deplored the fact that their movement had fewer members as a proportion of the population and was less well funded here than in other provinces, falling far behind the well-structured organisations of Alberta and B.C.

What accounts for this weakness in a region where socially significant ideologies of both Catholic and more recent secular nationalisms have been strongly pronatalist? Most of the credit for the effective, if not legislated, decriminalisation of abortions - practised outside of the provisions of the Canadian criminal code but in medically safe conditions - by the PQ government in 1978 lies with the steady, long term efforts of feminist reproductive rights organisers in the Centre des femmes, the Comité de lutte pour l'avortement et la contraception libres et gratuits and the Coordination nationale pour l'avortement libre et gratuit, the labour movement and the Parti québécois. They struggled from 1968, often around defense campaigns for abortion rights activist Dr. Henry Morgentaler, to establish the material and political conditions for women to take control of their reproductive lives. Here, PQ nationalism ultimately came into play, not in favour of pronatalist desires for high fertility levels at any cost, but to resist federal interference overturning the decisions of Quebec juries that three times acquitted Morgentaler. Nor, whatever their radical implications, should it be forgotten that abortion rights are in one sense a liberal issue of bodily integrity (2) and, as such, supported by main-stream civil rights organisations, like the Ligue des droits de l'homme.

But in this brief note, I want to point to the effect in this arena of another group, AFEAS (Association féminine d'éducation et d'action sociale) which is often overlooked (3). If the democratic elements of labour, nationalist and liberal ideology provide an opening for feminist advocates, one might expect the often politically and socially conservative social layer of practising Catholics where AFEAS was rooted to support religiously sanctioned anti-abortion activism. Instead, the particular brand of social Catholic feminism it developed served to undercut an important likely base

of support for such activities.

Under the influence of Vatican II reforms and liberal Quiet Revolution ideology, AFEAS was founded in 1966 from the fusion of the majority Union catholique des femmes rurales, a group that had opposed women's franchise up to 1940, and the much smaller urban Cercles d'économie domestique to promote family and women. The new association, the largest in the province, had local cercles in parishes overseen by a priest-chaplain, all of which followed a monthly meeting plan of discussion, prayer and arts-menager published in its revue Aféas. (While retaining a Christian orientation and optional priestly participation, in 1973 the organisation admitted non-Catholics (4); the revue became Femmes d'ici in 1979). According to its own assessments, its membership of 35-39,000 in the 1960s and 1970s was predominantly married women with children, many in their 40s and older, few independently employed in the labour market but often working on farms or in businesses owned by their husbands. It embarked on a programme of self-education, studying the operations of politics and economics, analysing modern social conditions, and training a parish-based leadership layer in social animation skills that share some common techniques of participatory self-interrogation and setting goals with feminist consciousness raising.

In 1972, AFEAS's executive issued a statement supporting existing legislation which permitted abortion under certain medical conditions. Without attacking doctrinal bases of prohibitions against abortion or calling for the liberalisation sought by activists, they argued that spousal disagreements about, and difficulties with, contraception, and economic and social stress, made abortion a necessity for some women in difficult circumstances. The law was right to safeguard such medical abortions in preference to unsafe, illegal procedures. Both the Quebec Conference of Bishops and many members were alarmed by this development.

As a result, an educational process was set in motion that served to justify, not abortion per se, but the importance of first, a woman's taking this moral decision in the light of her own conscience, and second, the separation of church and state. For the church hierarchy, AFEAS organised a study session where they, in the view of one member I interviewed, successfully explained their position. For its membership, it carefully explained in the pages of its journal all methods of birth control and

abortion including those proscribed by the Vatican and set out on a process of consciousness raising. Members were asked to remember that while a desired pregnancy was an occasion for joy, not all pregnancies were joyfully welcomed because of the dilemmas women faced. Speaking always in the intimate, singular "toi", the point was brought home to the level of shared experience by asking "Were you overjoyed by your last pregnancy?"

Thus, in this development AFEAS configured an ideology of compassion and individual choice out of feminist and liberal Catholic principles. In a 1964 study of (sub-)urban women, Colette Moreux has suggested that the falling family size can be accounted for by La fin d'une religion. Catholicism was, she suggests, an externally imposed rather than an internally cathected morality. Thus, when external controls are removed, there is nothing to prevent former adherents from breaking all the old rules. While this sort of dynamic might partially account for low levels of "Pro-vie" activism in Quebec, it cannot easily explain the women of AFEAS, who remain practising Catholics. Instead, we see an example of women reflecting mainstream ideological resources (here, Vatican II emphasis on individual conscience) through the prism of their own, their neighbours' and their aunts' experiences to reshape them to support their own more feminist ends. As a result, those members who agitated for increasingly feminist positions in the mid-1970s were able to influence AFEAS's ideological direction and to use its tight structure to diffuse, more generally, feminist tolerance for women's individual moral decisions with respect to abortion among their consoeurs in small centres across the province. Such feminist tolerance and pluralism are directly opposed to the univocal authoritarian message of the "anti-choice" forces.

Heather Jon Maroney

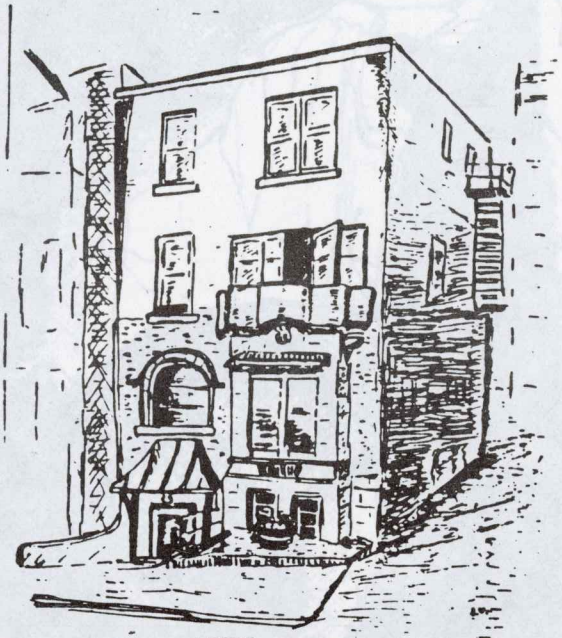
1. Contemporary Quebec Feminism: The Interrelation of Political and Ideological Development in Women's Organisations, Trade Unions, Political Parties and State Policy, 1960-1980. PhD thesis, McMaster University, 1988.

2. These contradictions are incisively analysed by Ros Petchesky in Abortion and Woman's Choice: The State, Sexuality and Reproductive Freedom, Northeastern University Press, 1985.

M. Cooley/86

3. This sketch only touches on AFEAS actions. It also, for example, gestated the important organisation Femmes collaboratrices which took up the cause of women working in "family" enterprises and reflected on unequal divisions of household labour.

4. Aféas 8:11, 1974:20.



HOMMAGE A FRANCOISE AUCLAIR

Françoise Auclair, former secretary of the Institute, died tragically this past August after a short and terrible struggle with MS. Françoise was much loved by students, faculty and fellows alike, many of whom wanted to say a special word in her memory. The following tributes are dedicated to her children, Xavier and Stephanie.

The first time I met Françoise she impressed me as someone possessing great vitality and wit. I soon came to think of her as the heartbeat of the Institute.

Mary Taylor

It was only one year from the time Françoise contracted her illness until the time of her death. It killed her with shocking speed. My memory of Françoise is of a warm, smiling, lively woman who created a special atmosphere around her at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute. Nothing you might need seemed to be too much trouble for her. Apart from her work, which she seemed to love and which she handled so well, she will always stand out in my memory as a loving mother for whom her children and our children were like "des rayons de soleil" - just like herself. She is sadly missed.

Dana Hearne

Françoise shared with us her unique passion for life. She was a whirlwind of vibrant emotion. Whether it was a walk on Mont-Royal, a skiing trip with the children, a piece of music, or a cause that called for social action, something very special was always happening in Françoise's life. She made it so and she sought to include us all and we, her friends, are blessed for having known her.

Mona MacLean

Il y a sept ans déjà nos enfants firent connaissance et nous présentèrent cavalièrement: "Voici ma mère". De voisines, compagnes de travail. Je te revois a l'Institut assise a ton bureau; quand je passe dans la rue Lockart, je respire encore les odeurs alléchantes de nos repas partagés,

j'entends les rires, les blagues, mais surtout je me rappelle ton coeur d'enfant, ta facilite a t'amuser. Les feux d'artifice, le patin, les glissades en traine sauvage, les pique-niques, meme sous la pluie, me feront toujours penser a toi, chere Francoise.

Lucie Lequin

When I think of Francoise, I think of someone who was very special. Francoise's overwhelming generosity and genuine concern were obvious; not to mention the incredible patience required to put up with all of us. I can think of one particular incident when Francoise's kindness touched me the most. I found myself in desperate need of a typewriter in order to meet a deadline. Hearing this, Francoise, despite not feeling her best that day, insisted I sit at her desk and use hers. It is no wonder I feel such a void without Francoise around. When I picture the Institure, one part of me still refuses to acknowledge that Francoise won't be back. Then again, Francoise will always be...in my mind. I think I will always wonder why beautiful people like Francoise are always taken away from us.

Francoise was the heart and hands of the S de B. With her warmth and openness, she made everyone's passage through the Institute a smoother one.

Susan Shea

When I think of Francoise at the Institute, I think of someone who was very much <u>there</u>. Usually cheerful, always busy, sometimes upset about something, occasionally angry, Francoise never disappeared into the woodwork. You knew she was there, and it was often not hard to guess how she was feeling. This quality of immediacy, of being truly present, was a kind of gift, and showed itself in the warmth and friendliness commented on by so many visitors to the Institute.

Jo Vellacott

Il est parfois difficile de voir ce que certains etres ont laisse derriere eux, mais dans le cas de Francoise il n'y aura aucun effort a faire. Si son intensite, sa generosite et sa passion ne vous viennent pas a l'esprit c'est que vous ne l'avez pas connue. Elle etait si ouverte a tout ce qui l'entourait que ceux qui ont croise son chemin, meme pour un court instant,

avaient l'impression de bien la connaître. En effet, si vous ne l'avez pas connue c'est que vous ne l'avez jamais rencontrée.

Christiane Savard

I first met Françoise Auclair in October of 1986. She was the most fun-loving person I have ever met. She was always smiling and laughing and ready with a helping hand for everyone. She was well loved by co-workers and students alike. She will be sadly missed and fondly remembered by all.

Linda Bowes

Françoise... What a joy! That laugh! sensitivity and expression. Woman-pride and principles. Courage and humour. Generosity of spirit, soul and self. Dignity. Thanks, Françoise, for all you've shared, much love,

Jo-Anne Beggs

Françoise, toujours souriante, toujours accueillante, toi qui a su être généreuse de ton temps et de tes énergies dans les moments le plus sombres de ta vie! Merci pour le visage "français" que tu as donné a l'Institut Simone de Beauvoir. Nous ne sommes pas prêtes de l'oublier.

Jeanne Maranda

Write a few words about Françoise——a difficult task, since she herself was hardly a taciturn soul. We spent many hours talking about life, love, feminism and especially her children. So these words are for them. I hope you will remember your mother, not as she was this past year, but in an earlier time. She loved you deeply, if not always wisely. She would never have chosen to leave you so early and indeed fought desperately against the idea that you might feel abandoned. But most of all, she wished to give you the gift of communication so that your feelings and thoughts would never be locked inside to fester or isolate you from others. She cannot be here to nurture you, but as she always spoke from her heart, so she would wish you to speak from yours.

Jane Gellert

Françoise was one of the few people I have met that when I think of them it makes me smile. She had an enormous smile. I remember one winter - it was one of those long and hard ones when nothing was going right - and I would pop by to say "hello" to Françoise and inevitably I would go away feeling happier and lighter. She made me feel more human because she was a profoundly human person. I'm sorry I didn't know her better. I thought I would have the time. I miss her.

Kathryn Harvey

My idea of a beautiful person is one who cares about others and the environment we live in. Françoise was such a person. At the Institute, we were all very lucky to have known her beauty, felt her strength and been inspired by her passion. An example: I wanted to re-open a course in Feminist Perspectives in Art which had been cancelled due to low enrollment. I walked into the Institute one day in search of help. Françoise was there, available and willing to help. She listened, then guided me to the proper channels until a miracle occurred. Despite the odds, we accomplished the impossible and the course was re-opened. Another example: while waiting to ask Françoise for the key to the W.S.S.A. office one day, I overheard her on the phone taking down all relevant information needed in order to register a student who couldn't at that moment register due to an illness. Immediately after she put the phone down, she got her coat and dashed out the door, headed for the Norris to register this student - and it was her lunch hour!

Denise Tremblay

Femmage compiled by Susan Shea

FRANCOISE SAUVAT AUCLAIR...BRAVO!

As I sat in the funeral parlor looking at Françoise, I decided she had won. Surrounded with loved ones and friends from her home, her neighborhood, and her Institute, she was making a grand exit. She looked as determined leaving as she did walking in the first day I sat in my office at the Institute as Principal. She came in, introduced herself and made sure that I understood where she stood. There had been difficult days at the Institute, but she had been in control. She stayed in control in spite of a very treacherous illness that sneaked up on her and took her by surprise.

As the first major attack approached she felt she was faced with a mighty enemy. She would get feisty and then depressed, but she wanted to make sure she was still doing a good job. This is when she started opening up and sharing. She wanted to make sure all was fine with her work. She wanted to make sure I understood that she wanted everything to be fine. She wanted me to share and explore with her the pain, anger, rage and shadow as the diagnosis was slow in coming. She wanted me to support and contain the process she had undertaken to go on an inner journey. Of course she was right. Her deep innate strength and common sense told her this was more than some psychological problem due to separation as she was told some years ago. This time she knew she was right, and then darkness followed.

One day she had to leave the office suddenly, and then she stayed home. She called every day for a week to make sure that all loose ends were taken care of. And then the weeks became months and her condition was not improving. This is when I appreciated why Francoise considered the Institute to be hers. From around Montreal and Quebec the telephone calls started coming - where is the new issue of the bulletin? Why don't we have copies of the new course descriptions? When is Françoise coming back? She always kept us informed...

She did come back one afternoon. She had started rehabilitation therapy. She climbed the stairs, and her smile filled the Institute. As soon as she was tired, she got up with great determination and negotiated the stairs down, one by one, but without help. She was determined to keep her promise to the children. She had promised them they would visit their

grandmother and their aunt in France during the summer. They planned the visit and made the trip. She had to be hospitalized in France but she persevered. She sent us postcards, she wrote a letter, and she kept a diary of the trip. She was determined not to withdraw her attention from the effort to keep it going for herself, for Stéphanie and for Xavier.

After she came back, she kept on calling and established a heart to heart bond by sharing so very intimate and painful issues. One day she insisted I had to go see her right away. When I arrived she was cheerful, she had dressed up for my visit and we laughed a lot and we discussed her plans for struggle and recovery. She gave me three small packages individually wrapped in giftpaper. Stéphanie, Xavier and Françoise had brought back three different cheeses from France - what they each liked best - and she wanted to share this as well as other moments of joy and frustration they had experienced on the trip. She gave me a copy of the diary she kept on her journey to share with special friends.

Then came the evening calls. Françoise would call at night, and depending on the day, discuss her meeting with her therapist, her doctor, her relationship with the children and friends who helped her regularly by visits and giving her lifts. She started a healing process many times by Yoga lessons, by breathing exercises, by discussions with the children. And we always spoke French.

But I am writing in English. This was her last effort - a determination to speak English to prove to herself that she could remember, that she was re-uniting with the real world...and she was doing much better than before her illness. The words came naturally, the sentences formed easily, hope danced in her voice...and then darkness came again.

I got used to expecting a call from Françoise around seven in the evening. She knew I was experiencing difficult days. She asked about progress and gave me hope. She gave me soothing words, then gradually drifted into a dream world. "Bonne nuit et sweet dreams" she repeated over and over until she was out of breath and hung up the phone.

The day her children had to call the ambulance she decided there should be a limit to suffering, not only for her, but for her loved ones. She told me a final goodbye...she had so many dreams and I reminded her of

some...she drifted over the phone with a sigh. It was a difficult moment. I thought, "She will reconsider." I had forgotten what a determined person she was. She had decided **to make peace**, to **let it be** and that it was not necessarily a sign of courage **to be always doing**.

A few weeks later I received the notice for her funeral service. As I walked into the funeral chapel, I saw her lying down with that determined look on her face once again. I knew she did not want to leave when there was so much going on, when she wanted to play the piano, she wanted to dance, but she had decided otherwise and executed her decision. She was challenging me for a final joke...but I did not have the strength at that moment. Instead I cried, because she had created for me so many memories as she was losing hers, if only in bits and pieces. She had given me yet another gift to share with you all at the Institute.

Arpi Hamalian

APRES LA FOIRE

J'ai participe a la Foire internationale du livre feministe tenue a Montreal en juin dernier. J'y etais en tant que representante du mouvement Evaluation-Medias/Mediawatch, en tant que redactrice francophone des Canadian Women Studies/Les Cahiers de la femme et j'y ai ete impliquee de plus pres en tant que coordonnatrice des quelque quarante ateliers.

C'est dire que j'ai passe beaucoup de temps au Cepsum de l'Universite de Montreal ou se tenait l'evenement. J'etais en mesure de sentir l'interet, la curiosite et le grand message de solidarite dans mes contacts avec toutes les femmes que j'ai rencontrees, chez toutes celles qui se sont presentees.

Mais il m'a semble qu'il en manquait de ces femmes que je connais bien, qui travaillent avec les femmes, qui sont actives dans le monde des lettres quebecoises. Il y manquait, en somme, mes compatriotes, j'irais meme jusqu'a dire que d'importantes feministes brillaient par leur absence!

Et pourtant quelle chance! 55 pays etaient representes par 275 maisons d'edition, a trop forte concentration de lesbiennes americaines, je soulignerais. Une representation inegale des travaillantes de l'edition?

J'ai bien note que mes interventions aupres du public se faisaient a 95% en anglais. Pourquoi m'en plaindre? Avec mes deux "chapeaux" bilingues, j'aurais eu mauvaise grace de condamner une situation qui servait mes interets. La Foire etait l'occasion revee d'elargir mon territoire, de joindre les femmes hors-Quebec. Mais j'aurais aime parler aux Quebecoises de l'action de mon groupe contre le sexisme dans les medias. Ou etiez-vous donc, mes amies quebecoises? Le bilinguisme linguistique et le bilinguisme sexuel vous ont-ils fait peur? Je le regrette pour vous et pour les exposantes qui n'ont pas fait leurs frais.

Il y a eu quelque part l'omission d'une realite tres quebecoise qu'il est juste de questionner. Pas asez de temps? d'argent? de collaboration? de publicite?

C'etait un vaste projet plein de promesses qui n'a pas eu les retombees escomptees. Il faut le deplorer.

Jeanne Maranda

The silver of scholarly speech, we know is purely metaphorical. Academics quickly learn that the spoken word exists only as the ephemeral forerunner of the text-to-be. The large chunks of university life which take place orally are consigned to an epistemologically uncertain demi-monde; they are rarely given serious discussion, never made the object of scholarly recompense. They live on only in the semi-public form of gossip: you have to have been there.

There are, of course, a few hybrid forms which attempt to combine oral and written modes: transcriptions of conference proceedings, interviews. Both try to capture the illusion of thought in process. Interviews especially throw the work of eminent writers into the material world of circumstance, the how and the why, enticing the reader into a reassuring complicity.

Every now and then a thinker comes along who tries to use these mixed forms to specific purpose. French writers, accustomed to exercising their public duties as intellectuals, are particularly adept with the interview form. Michel Foucault went further than this: he used the interview strategically as a way or orienting the reception of his works, especially in the States. I would suspect that Foucault is quoted far more in English from his interviews than from any of his books. Different from his books and yet very much an extension of them, the interviews solicit and invite the reader to move from the realm of pure idea to the complex exposition of the books.

Gayatri Spivack is best known as the English translator of Jacques Derrida's Grammatology. She is also a feminist theorist currently enjoying a great deal of popularity. Her use of mixed modes is entirely different. She doesn't use them to direct readers to writing of a more traditionally academic kind. Her writing takes on the circuitous temporalities of speech just as her speaking partakes of the breadth and depth of writing. In this, perhaps more than in any other way, she is the perfect Derridean. Speech neither displays priority over writing nor proclaims itself as essentially different. Each form of expression conforms to the same rigorous constraints.

I watched Gayatri Spivack perform at a conference in England this summer. I became convinced that she is the inventor of a new art form I call academic performance art. She has brought the voice back into academic discourse by eliminating the priority usually given writing.

Spivack recently published a book called In other worlds. Responding to the appropriate clues sent off by recent journal articles, I was convinced that Spivack had something important to say about the articulation between deconstruction and feminist commitment. I couldn't get very far along in the book, though. I was annoyed at the lack of respect the book seemed to have for its reader. It was full of references to the talks, audiences and friends which had given rise to the various essays in the book. The book suffered from context-overload.

Seeing Spivack in action convinced me that her strategy is deliberate and coherent (although this might not make it a whole lot more courteous). Her presentation, which involved reading a long written text punctuated with extemporaneous comments throughout, was a totally new experience. Not a written paper read aloud, but an oral performance. The shape of the sentences and the shape of the thoughts were given the fluidity of thought in process. There was virtuosity in the breadth and rapidity of the ad libbed comments. Context was all. Every thought was related to the identity of its enunciator; every idea attached to its social and political locus.

Some in the audience were offended, others subjugated. Few, I would expect, reacted mainly to the content of the talk. (In any case, only those familiar with Spivack already could do that; no one hearing her for the first time could "understand" everything she said- the vocabulary and form of exposition were too unfamiliar). There was no doubt in anyone's mind that the talk had been a performance and the speaker a performer.

Perhaps I'm sounding unduly naive. Aren't many academics performers? Few, I think, so deliberately give their spontaneous comments the same complex development as their finely wrought texts.

Whatever may come of Spivack's daring conjunction of Derrida with feminist and Third World concerns (and I am still in no position to assess that attempt), whatever may come of the notoriety she now enjoys, she has

and allegiance to academic values makes us nervous about the mixing of oral and written modes. But feminist suspicion of these divisions should at least inspire our curiosity for what Spivack brings- and, perhaps in time, something more.

Sherry Simon

THE ETHICS OF FEMINIST REVIEWING AND PUBLISHING

In my mind a new series of articles mark a certain maturity in the feminist struggle to establish a literary world of our own. The oldest is Bertha Harris's article in the fall, 1977, Heresies entitled "What We Mean to Say: Notes Toward Defining the Nature of Lesbian Literature". Harris accuses "popular" lesbian feminist literature of a failure of nerve and imagination. Instead of daring to be great, that is, "monstrous," lesbian literature panders to the "average" lesbian reader—a non-reader—who wants to change a "chateaubriand into a wimpeyburger". Having herself been accused of being a difficult and therefore elitist and therefore politically incorrect writer, Harris got her own back and then some in that article. Much later, in 1985, a controversy about Naiad Press's marketing of the anthology Lesbian Nuns brought many lesbian-feminists, lesbians, heterosexual feminists, and so on, up short and made them question assumptions about their expectations, literary and ethical, of "our" presses.

More recently, Adrian Oktenberg's review of poetry by Judith Barrington, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Pat Parker, Olga Broumas and Jane Miller, A Quartet of Voices, in the April 1966 Women's Review of Books, set many readers' teeth on edge. In its June issue, Mary Meigs charged that Oktenberg's review aimed "savage blows not only at the poetry but at the poet" and so violated developing canons of lesbian ethics: "I believe that a feminist critic has the obligation to consider the effect of her words, to remember that words kill. If she is unable to be kind, she should at least try to be just. Oktenberg, looking at Pratt's poetry, is neither."

Oktenberg thanked Meigs for raising the issue of the ethics of feminist reviewing, but argued that reviewers have been kept from making judgements about the literary merits or demerits of feminist books. According to Oktenberg,

> In seven or eight years of reviewing feminist books, I have never, until now, published a review that was less than laudatory. This is because my remarks have been censored by editors, and in a particular way. Any slight reservation expressed about a book, any qualification of praise, from a phrase to a paragraph to an entire review—these have been excised at the editing stage. The result is that every

single review appears to contain nearly unqualified praise. This is absurd. It is not fair to readers or writers. As a creative writer myself, I know that writers want criticism, demand it, the more detailed the better....

But in our publications, we don't want judgements made. We seem to be afraid of them. Why? They smack too much of patriarchy? In the feminist utopia, all of us will be equal, none being more equal than others, in talent, perception, knowledge of our craft. In the here and now, I just want to know what I can read that won't bore me silly, annoy me by its ineptness, or whatever. Of course, of course good feminist literature is being produced, more every day, and any good book is a gift from the goddesses. But feminist reviewers must point it out, they must make judgements.

If Oktenberg's claims are true and especially if her experiences are not unique, feminist publishers need to do some soul searching. Feminist publishers might be re-creating that early 1970's moment in the "movement" when falsely rosy claims that "we're all sisters here" were succeeded by nearly universal outbreaks of trashing and claims about abuses of power.

In the same June, 1986 issue of the Women's Review, Naiad novelist Katherine V. Forrest blasted Julia Penelope's April review of Mab Segrest's My Mama's Dead Squirrel: Lesbian Essays on Southern Culture, published by Firebrand Books, as an "irresponsible and damaging" "scatter-gun dismissal of lesbian/feminist small press publishing". Forrest does not discuss the legitimacy of Penelope's criticisms; rather, she accuses her of disloyalty and elitism. If Penelope is dissatisfied with the literary quality of many lesbian/feminist books published by small presses, that is because "most of the books she reads are not written for her." This extraordinary judgement is succeeded by yet another: "Perhaps Penelope has never asked herself that vital question any book critic must ask to be fair to the book she is reading and/or reviewing: Who is the audience for this book? As a successful writer of lesbian novels, I know who my audience is; and it is not Julia Penelope".

In her reply, Penelope rightfully challenges both Forrest's condescending "defences" of inadequate editing by feminist presses and her exclusion as a reader. Claiming that Barbara Grier, Forrest's publisher at

Naiad, had also made the same attempt, Penelope asks one of the central questions behind this debate: "If the books published by a Lesbian press don't include me in their audience, then who are they written for? I'd like to see the market profile of the imagined audience for Lesbian-published books. Does it include a taste for "trickle down" manuscripts that find their way to small publishers because they've been successively rejected by larger presses?"

Before this debate turns into a brawl, all interested parties—readers, writers, and publishers—need to do some thinking about the literary and cultural objectives of the lesbian and feminist press, about whether that press is meeting them and about the ethics of literary criticism within the feminist community. Will lesbian and feminist novelists recapitulate (in a condensed time span, perhaps) the history of the heterosexual bourgeois novel and serve first as artless reflectors of a newly visible social group, then enter a phase of high realism, then re-invent modernism and post-modernism? Is the debate in the April and June issues of the Women's Review a signpost of a coming war over "high" and "low" art forms? Will feminist reviewers need to swear that they will first "do no harm"? If our literary endeavours are to be governed not so much by questions of profit on art, as by an ethic which seems implicitly to be one of caring and compassion, we need to say so in print. And we also need to define what caring has to do with political correctness and literary quality.

I had the opportunity this summer to interview the publisher of Firebrand Press, Nancy K. Bereano, about her literary and political goals and about the ethics of publishing. It seems to me that Bereano is a woman of vision. As former editor of the Feminist series at the Crossing Press, she published fiction, poetry and theory by Audre Lorde, Jan Clausen, Judy Grahn and Marilyn Frye that is much closer to Bertha Harris's "chateaubriand" than to "wimpeyburger". She tried to develop a list that was commercially viable but also ethnically diverse and of high literary quality. Believing that writing by third world feminists was the most exciting around, and believing that readers would think so too, Bereano made such writers welcome at the Crossing Press.

Bereano's goals now at Firebrand are both literarily and politically challenging and mark the maturing of the feminist press. Commenting on the

shift in focus from the coming out novel to the novel which assumes a lesbian identity, Bereano said that she wants to expand the parameters of what constitutes lesbian feminist publishing. She wants to publish work by lesbians for whom lesbianism is central, yet whose fictional concerns open out to the world. As an example, she pointed to Rachel Guido de Vries's novel, Tender Warriors, which is about the loving struggles of an Italian-American working class family which eventually finds room for a lesbian, an ex-drug addict, and an emotionally and physically sick young man. Our conversation seemed to lead naturally into a discussion of the ethical and sexual controversies raised by Naiad Press's marketing of Lesbian Nuns and then to the treatment of sexuality in Firebrand's fiction and poetry. A book, Bereano said, cannot go further than the writer can envision. Five years ago, Rachel Guido de Vries couldn't have written Tender Warriors; the writing may have been possible, but she couldn't have imagined the possibilities she does now. Discussing the "delightfully jarring" erotic poems in Cheryl Clarke's collection, Living as a Lesbian, Bereano linked Clarke's achievements as a poet with her success at integrating her sexuality into the fullness of her identity. Doing so requires both sexual and literary security, something which hasn't been a given in the lesbian or feminist community. When risk-takers like Audre Lorde, in Zani, for example, or Joan Nestle or Amber Hollibaugh "aggressively display themselves all over their books", Bereano hears "her mental furniture shift."

Because Nancy Bereano has a reflective and a political view of the interdependence of the feminist reader, writer and publisher, and because she sees her role as an editor and a publisher as helping to educate and challenge the literary and political sensibilities of her readership, her comments about her work so far might stimulate discussion in print of the state of feminist publishing, particularly about the need to clarify our ethical and literary standards beyond name-calling and charges of elitism and disloyalty.

K.M. Martindale

Simonne Monet Chartrand. Ma vie comme rivière, tome 3. Montréal, Les éditions remue-menage, 1988, 341 p.

L'auteure place en exergue une phrase d'Adrienne Rich: "Le privé est politique" et nous demande de voir, derrière son récit autobiographique, le politique. Selon nos propres tonalités, comme elle, il faut se laisser prendre par le va-et-vient entre l'intime et le collectif, entre le privé et le politique. Communicatrice adroite, lectrice avide, rédactrice alerte, activiste invétérée, Simone Monet Chartrand a visé juste et nous entraîne avec brio dans le sillage des annees 1949-1963, dans sa vie, mais aussi dans la vie des femmes et des hommes de sa génération, celle de mes parents. La lecture de ce troisième tome de Ma vie comme rivière m'émeut, comme les deux premiers l'ont fait avant, car j'ai toujours l'impression que ma mère parle avec Simonne de sa vie privée qu'elle nous a racontée lorsque nous étions enfants, adolescents ou plutôt s'agirait'il de la vie de ma tante Thérèse ou encore de celle de la mère de Claude? C'est qu'en écho, le récit de Simonne rappelle à plusieurs des souvenirs personnels semblables aux siens, à ceux de ses enfants et à ce titre s'inscrit très près de l'histoire orale, car derrière les mots, la voix chaleureuse de l'auteure résonne. Merci Simonne de donner une forme écrite a cette petite et grande histoire de la vie quotidienne.

De plus, au fil de l'eau et des ans, Simonne raconte son engagement socio-politique souvent à contre-courant. A coup d'anecdotes, de photos, de textes originaux, d'extraits, de résumés, de lettres, elle transmet une compréhension personnelle des années cinquante. Par exemple, elle fait revivre son action auprès des femmes de grévistes dont le sort est souvent oublié dans l'histoire des grèves. Ailleurs, elle rappelle son indignation devant les pressions que l'église exerça sur les membres des Cercles des fermières afin qu'elles adherent plutôt a l'UCFR, association sous la tutelle de l'eglise, comme si le tissage au métier etait une activité catholique. C'est aussi son implication à la radio, au parti CCF qui revit sous nos yeux. Enfin la mise en perspective de coutumes tel que le banc familial a l'eglise, d'événements politiques, notamment la démission mysterieuse de Mgr Charbonneau, de préjugés, par exemple l'obligation pour une femme enceinte de ne pas se montrer devant des jeunes filles s'entrelace aux préoccupations d'une mère de famille nombreuse, souvent seule face aux multiples tâches domestiques qui pourtant ne l'ont jamais

tenue loin de l'action collective.

Toujours sous l'éclairage de la conscience sociale, la chronique de ces faits historiques montre la difficile transformation des conditions de vie des Québécoises et Québécois et plus important laisse sourdre les émotions: tendresse, générosite, colère, impatience, révolte de ceux qui ont lutté tels que Simonne et Michel. Ce collage de souvenirs, de sentiments et d'histoire évite les idées toutes faites sur notre passé recent et montre avec éloquence qu'il y a pour chacune et chacun une vérité du quotidien. En effet, Simonne évite le piège de la vérité absolue et soi-disant neutre. Cette tranche de vie, cette tranche d'histoire, en plus de nous offrir un niveau exceptionnel de connaissance d'une période, nous permet de mieux saisir que l'interaction entre le privé et le politique se façonne dans un double mouvement, les deux sphères parfois si entrelacées qu'on ne peut plus les dissocier.

Ce récit autobiographique intéressera surtout les Québécoises et les Québécois qui y retrouveront une partie de leur patrimoine racontée simplement et de façon très humaine. La facture de son recit n'étonne plus; elle nous y avait habitué/e/s dès le premier tome. Néanmoins, le plaisir de découvrir la Vie d'une femme qui a su prendre la place qu'elle avait à prendre reste fort agréable.

Lucie Lequin

Olga S. Opfell, The Lady Laureates: Women Who Have Won the Nobel Prize. 2nd ed. The Scarecrow Press, 1986.

In the course of the twentieth century the Nobel Prize has become synonymous with the ultimate recognition of excellence in the areas of literature, science and contributions to world peace. This legacy of Swedish industrialist Alfred Nobel is awarded annually for the most important discoveries in physics, chemistry, and physiology or medicine; the most outstanding literary work of "an idealistic tendency", and the best work for outstanding professionals, representatives of authors' associations, various governments and international parliamentary organisations. The awards, a medal and accompanying cash prize, are presented on 10 December at glittering ceremonies in Stockholm and Oslo.

There has been a considerable body of literature on Alfred Nobel and the prize winners. The first edition of freelance writer Olga S. Opfell's book on the "lady laureates," appeared in 1978. It has been updated for the second edition to include twenty "extraordinary women who have won the Nobel Prize" before 1984. The book begins with short essays on Alfred Nobel, the Nobel Prize, and women and the prizes. This is followed by the main body of the text, divided into three major sections: "The Peace Prize" (seven women), "The Literature Prize" (six women), and "The Science Prize" (seven women).

The author has done considerable background research on the twenty women discussed in the text. It is quite obvious, however, that this volume is the work of a journalist, rather than a serious scholar. This is reflected in the choice of chapter titles (e.g. "A divided heart," - author Pearl S. Buck; or "Madonna of the onion," - theoretical physicist Maria Goeppert-Mayer). It is also apparent from the peculiar organisation of the material within the biographical essays and from her vocabulary.

Opfell is at her best when she writes about the recent peace laureates, Betty Williams and Maired Corrigan, Mother Teresa, and Alva Myrdal. She does a fair job in discussing the work of the six literature laureates, quoting important passages from their works. Unfortunately, she does not give exact references to the works cited. Opfell is least successful in discussing the important contributions of the seven women who won eight science prizes (Marie Curie won two in 1903 and 1911) during the

1903-83 period. The reader gets very little insight regarding the general situation of women in science. Moreover, the poor organisation of the individual entries and the inclusion of much irrelevant material mars this potentially useful setion. Who cares that Maria Goeppert-Mayer visited her childhood nurse on her honeymoon, or that she wore a green brocade gown to the Nobel ceremony, but changed to a red chiffon one for the King's banquet? She created the new "shell" model of the atomic nucleus! And why say that Gerty Cory's first joint publication with her future husband was "published in a scientific paper"? Scientists' papers usually are! Opfell shows little understanding about how scientists function, or the difficulties women scientists have faced during the last few centuries. After all, women have long been known to favour peace over war; and at least since the time of Sappho, some women have been recognized as poets and novelists. But science has always been considered a male domain! Opfell does not explain the importance of the Nobel Prize as the ultimate recognition of women's scientific work by the international scientific community. The out-of-context treatment and journalistic vocabulary of the section on the science laureates does no justice to the contribution of the seven women.

The volume concludes with "Time Lines: 1833-1984," and a brief but useful bibliography. "Time Lines" includes "significant" dates beginning with the birth of Alfred Nobel. While the idea is laudable, this section contains much utterly irrelevant material. It should be scrapped in future editions.

There is a considerable amount of good data, buried among trivia, that should be used for a further, updated version of the book. An expanded, more scholarly introduction, based on recent works on women's history, combined with rigorous editing and improved typesetting would greatly enhance the book's usefulness. I would also recommend a change in the title, from "Lady" to "Women Laureates"!

Marianne Gosztonyi Ainley

Teresa de Lauretis, Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film, and Fiction, Indiana University Press, 1987.

In Technologies of Gender Teresa de Lauretis continues to pursue and elaborate a theoretical project already well under way in her earlier book Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema (Indiana University Press, 1984). Both books contribute to the on-going articulation of a critical framework within which issues central to feminism could be explored. The critical idioms which de Lauretis draws on, but also challenges are semiotics (the important figures for her are Charles Sanders Peirce and Umberto Eco) and Foucauldian discourse analysis.

Proceeding from the semiotic perception of language and other systems of signification as producing signs whose meanings are established by specific codes, de Lauretis proposes to look at the way in which these codes have defined and identified "woman." While concerned to unravel and expose these dominant representations—the images held up to women as their mirror image and natural destiny—de Lauretis is also committed to a contestatory (political) project, one which challenges the received 'naturalized' views. To this end she introduces, in Alice Doesn't, an important distinction between woman and women; while by the former she means "a fictional construct, a distillate from diverse but congruent discourses dominant in Western cultures (critical and scientific, literary or juridical discourses)" the latter is a term she reserves for "the real historical beings who cannot as yet be defined outside of those discursive formations, but whose material existence is nonetheless certain" (p.5). In investigating the relation between women as historical subjects and the notion of woman as it is produced by the hegemonic discourses, de Lauretis focuses on what makes possible both representation and self-representation, and effectively demonstrates the non-coincidence of "woman" and "women". Central to this endeavor is the feminist understanding of the sex-gender system as a socio-cultural construct and a semiotic apparatus, "a system of representation which assigns meaning (identity, value, prestige, location in kinship, status in the social hierarchy, etc.) to individuals within society" (Technologies, p.5).

The point of departure of Alice Doesn't is an argument concerning the problematic position of the female subject in both critical theory

(semiotics and psychoanalysis in particular) and fictional narratives (film practice in particular). Both the theory and the practice deny women the status of producers of culture, establishing "man" as the sole term of reference and leaving the female reader/spectator in an empty space, unrepresented and outside the symbolic order. Speaking as a woman and a feminist theorist, de Lauretis seeks to reclaim a space for the female subject, and she does so by redefining the terms of the investigation, introducing new questions, and trying out new propositions. Alice Doesn't concludes with the articulation of a new imperative: the need to theorize experience—most urgently the experience of sexuality—in order to arrive at a better understanding of how the female subject is en-gendered. The book ends with a provocative question and a tentative agenda for future work: "is the female subject one constituted in a particular kind of relation to social reality? by a particular kind of experience, specifically a particular experience of sexuality? And if we answer that, yes a certain experience of sexuality does effect a social being which we may call the female subject, that is, that experience, that complex of habits, dispositions, associations and perceptions, which en-genders one as female, then that is what remains to be analyzed, understood, articulated by feminist theory" (p. 182).

In Technologies of Gender de Lauretis sets out to pursue such a project with one important modification. Here the focus of analysis is no longer the particular experience of sexuality, for de Lauretis seeks now to theorize gender beyond the limits of "sexual difference" and the constraints that such a notion has come to impose on feminist critical thought. Drawing on Foucault's theory of sexuality as a "technology of sex," she proposes that gender, too, "both as representation and as self-representation, is the product of various social technologies, such as cinema, as well as institutional discourses, epistemologies, and critical practices" (ix). In her challenging theoretical introduction to the volume, de Lauretis spells out the terms of this new undertaking by advancing four propositions which will provide the theoretical underpinnings of her study. She argues that a) gender is a representation (with concrete social and subjective implications); b) the representation of gender is its construction; c) the construction of gender goes on as busily today as it did in earlier times; d) that therefore the construction of gender is also effected by its deconstruction.

Alice Doesn't is mostly concerned with deconstructing representations of Woman, showing, for example, how the dominant logic of narratives (both verbal and visual) invariably casts a woman's story as an answer to male desire. Technologies of Gender, on the other hand, ventures beyond representation to self representation, beyond the territory claimed by the Name of the Father to the new uncharted regions of feminist experimentation and contestation. Moving through readings of Foucault, Eco, Calvino and Fellini, de Lauretis "dives into the wreck" (in Adrienne Rich's words) to re-emerge on the other side of discourse, in a place she describes as being at once inside and outside the ideology of gender. This is the space created by feminist filmmakers like Yvonne Rainer, Chantal Akerman, Lizzie Borden, Sally Potter and others. In their work de Lauretis recognizes an experience hitherto unrepresented, images previously unseen in film, a visual and symbolic space organized so as to address its spectator as a woman (regardless of the gender of the individual viewer).

De Lauretis's work, it appears to me, is important not only by virtue of its theoretical lucidity, its vigorous application of theoretical models to elucidate cultural practices, and its never-complacent commitment to political feminism. It is also a highly suggestive and timely attempt to reconcile the respective, at times conflicting, demands of what Toril Moi has conveniently labeled, in Sexual/Textual Politics (Methuen, 1985), Anglo-American Feminist Criticism and French Feminist Theory. Very schematically, the more empirically and politically oriented Anglo-American feminist tradition—represented by such figures as Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, Elaine Showalter, and Judith Fetterley—emphasizes women's different experiences of the world, and urges the critic to define these differences as they are located in the particular biographical experiences of writers and readers and in the more general cultural ideology that conditions both the behavior patterns and the modes of discourse available to men and women. The more philosophically oriented French Feminist tradition—represented by writers like Kristeva, Cixous, Irigaray, and Wittig—seeks to undermine dualistic thought-modes and cultural systems, and calls for the construction of a new language of the female or the other, an ecriture feminine, which deliberately ruptures binary systems of synchronic and diachronic oppositions, of syntax, vocabulary, and genre.

De Lauretis engages both these positions, but rather than ally herself with one against the other, develops a theoretical paradigm that is complex

and flexible enough to accommodate a range of strategies and a multiplicity of subject-positions. Writing with the aim of giving voice to a resisting female subject, a feminist agent, de Lauretis advocates what Paul Smith has characterized, in Discerning the Subject (U of Minnesota P, 1988) as a double strategy, a tactic of "putting ostensibly contradictory but overlapping items on the agenda" (p. 149). On the one hand, this strategy involves an attack on traditional and masculinist notions of "woman", along with a revindication of female specificity (in the name of historical "women"). On the other hand, it employs deconstructive techniques to displace the notion of a fixed subject, without, however, giving in to the temptation to celebrate an undifferentiated dispersed subject. In the last instance, de Lauretis's work inspires us to conceive of an historicized (historicizing) feminist critique that has the potential to bring about radical change; such change, she argues, "requires a delineation and a better understanding of the difference of women from Woman, and that is to say as well, the differences among women (Technologies, p. 136).

Bina Freiwald